

Captain Sheldons House
West Suffield, Connecticut

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Connecticut

Historic American Buildings Survey
Harold H. Davis, District Officer
29 Whitney Ave., New Haven, Conn.

CAPT. SHELDON HOUSE

West Suffield, Hartford County, Conn.

Owner: Christopher Michel

Date of Erection: 1723

Architect: Not Known

Builder: Not Known

Number of Stories: Two and One-half

Materials of Construction: Stone foundation
Oak framed house
Brick filled between studs
Exterior clapboarded
Floor oak planking
Chimney split field stone
tapped with local brick
Hardware, handwrought iron
Interior finish, pin panelling,
line and hair plaster

List of Photographs:

1. Southwest Elevation
2. North Room - 1st Floor
3. Cupboard North Room - 1st Floor

CAPTAIN SHELDON HOUSE

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West Suffield, Hartford County, Connecticut

The Captain Sheldon House, also known as the Jonathan Sheldon Place, is claimed to be the oldest house in Suffield. It was built in 1723 by Captain Jonathan Sheldon. It was willed from son to son in the Sheldon family, then sold to the Owens family and again willed from son to son. It was taken in 1829 by Sheldon, Halkins, and Lyman by a foreclosure of a mortgage which they held, and sold to Gustavus Austin. By inheritance it became the property of his son, T. Jefferson, and later his grandson, Charles C. Austin. In 1901 it was sold by the latter Mr. Austin to R. L. Thener, from whose estate it was bought in 1904 by Charlee Michel, the present owner.

More seems to be known of the interesting people who lived in this old house, or who have sprung from the Sheldon stock. The builder, Jonathan Sheldon, was the fourteenth and youngest son of Isaac Sheldon, the settler of the Town of Windsor, Connecticut. Jonathan Sheldon, during the course of his life, gave to five of his sons each a separate farm around the old homestead and farm on Sheldon Street. Most of the sons married from among their neighbors and thereby inaugurated an interesting and growing family along Sheldon Street.

In 1740, after a heated struggle of five years with the parent or first Society of Suffield, the West Suffield Society was formed and meeting house erected in 1744. The present building, dedicated in 1840, stands on the same spot.

Mary Sheldon, the youngest daughter of Jonathan Sheldon, and her husband, the Reverend John Graham who was the first pastor of the new society, took up residence near the meeting house from 1746 to 1796. They were the parents of the celebrated Dr. Sylvester Graham who was born in 1794, the youngest of seventeen children. His name is one of fame, not only in his native town, but probably the world over, because of its connection with Graham bread and crackers. Also, besides being an orator and preacher of note, he was a staunch advocate of the vegetarian theory, now called the "Graham System". He was also the editor of the Graham Magazine in Boston, and an essay of this publication on bread and bread making so irritated the bakers of that town that he was mobbed.

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CAPTAIN SHELDON HOUSE

West Suffield, Hartford County, Connecticut

The Captain Sheldon house in Suffield, from which this interesting clan emanated, is at present in good condition, and from its position six feet back from the road, it stands as the sire of the now grown families of Sheldon Street.

Sources of information: Old Houses of Connecticut.-
Manuscript Copy by the
Colonial Dames of America.

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Approved: *Harold N. Davis* Date: *4/25/40* (1)